

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1 and 3-9 are currently being prosecuted. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2, and thus claim 2 has been cancelled. Also, the dependencies of claims 3, 6 and 8 have been changed from claim 2 to claim 1. No new matter has been added by the present amendments. Claim 1 is independent.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 2-8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants greatly appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

In light of this indication, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 2. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that by the present amendment, pending claims 1 and 3-9 are allowable and thus the rejection as discussed herein below is moot.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. §119

Though there is no indication of the Examiner's acknowledgment for a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 or receipt of the certified priority document, Applicants assume

that the priority document has been received. Confirmation of receipt of the priority document is respectfully requested in the next Office Action.

Drawings

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating in the Office Action that the drawings filed on June 16, 2005 are acceptable.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed June 16, 2005, and for providing an initialed copy of the PTO/SB/08 form filed therewith.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Stocking (USP No. 4,382,369). Applicants respectfully traverse this art rejection insofar as it pertains to the presently pending claims.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding to the Examiner's rejection, but to merely expedite prosecution, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2.

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Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this art rejection.

Cited References

Since the references cited by the Examiner have not been relied on to reject the claims, but have merely been cited to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

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Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that claims are allowable, and the application is now in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact James T. Eller, Jr., Reg. No. 39,538 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: November 15, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 

James T. Eller, Jr.

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